

### **Missouri Senate Acts on SMS Name-Change, DNA Legislation and Collective Bargaining**

Once we were able to shut down a filibuster that lasted for nearly 30 hours over five days, lawmakers in the Missouri Senate were able to accomplish a great deal this week including passage of legislation requiring all convicted felons to provide a sample of their DNA.

Senator Ken Jacob opposed Senate Bill 714, which changes the name of Springfield's Southwest Missouri State University to Missouri State University. A filibuster like Jacob's is designed to give one member of the Senate the power to derail legislation. It is used very rarely. It is generally done by having members speak around the clock to prevent the majority from voting.

However, in this case it was only a few Senators who objected to this name change and the differences did not fall along party lines. Opponents have argued that the name change would dilute the prestige of the University of Missouri – Columbia and eventually pit the two schools against each other in funding feuds.

A compromise was finally reached that makes passage of the name-change bill contingent on the passage of a proposal to issue \$190 million in bonds for life science buildings for the University of Missouri. I support this proposal because I think life sciences are vital to the successes of the future of our state.

Following the end of the filibuster, the Senate perfected Senate Bill 1000 that will allow the law enforcement to take a sample of DNA any individual who is convicted of a felony or any sexual offense.

The DNA sample will be taken with a swab from the convicted felon's mouth, and the cost of administering the test will be paid through a mandatory fee assessed on any person who has been convicted of a qualifying offense. Law enforcement agencies from throughout Missouri already utilize the state's DNA database as a crime-fighting tool. This legislation will also allow our state to communicate with the federal agencies and other states as to who may be felons on the run.

After a final Senate vote, this bill will be sent to the House of Representatives for consideration. I supported this bill as another way to protect our communities.

In a 20-13 vote, the Senate passed House Concurrent Resolution 5, which will block the collection of mandatory union dues from state workers.

In 2001, Governor Holden signed an executive order allowing collective bargaining for most state employees. In so doing, the governor far exceeded the legal scope of executive orders. Last December, the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules found the rule lacking in compliance with Missouri law.

The executive order allowed union-negotiated contracts to include provisions charging fees to all employees in a bargaining unit, even those who choose not to join the union.

A mechanism for collecting fees was contained in a rule proposed by the State Office of Administration, but the Legislature can block rules by adopting a resolution – which is exactly what was done. I supported the blocking of this executive order on the basis that the governor far exceeded his scope for imposing mandatory withdrawals from state employees' paychecks. This measure is not anti-union – it's pro-employee. No one should be forced to pay a fee against his or her will.

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